

REVIEWS

THE RESULTS OF RADIUM AND X-RAY THERAPY IN MALIGNANT DISEASE. From the Christie Hospital and Holt Radium Institute, Manchester. Compiled by Ralston Paterson, Margaret Tod, and Marion Russell.

THIS is the Third Statistical Report from this Institute and covers the years 1940-44 inclusive assessed at five years, and 1934-38 assessed at ten years

The report commences with a general survey of the results of treatment in malignant disease and follows the lines of those already published and now well known.

An attempt to analyse the five-year results of treatment is made in the second part (1940-44) and to present them in such a way as to interest everyone who is looking for information about the efforts to control cancer, but who have no special knowledge of radiotherapy. The third part is concerned with the ten-year results (1934-38) on cases already dealt with in a previous report.

In Part one a survey is carried out by site on those forms of cancer which, in the main, are accessible to treatment by Radium and X-rays. There is a short commentary on the cancers of each site which are admirable in form and very fair in the assessment of the value of radiation therapy.

In Part two, the results obtained during the five-year period are set out in such a way as to enable radiotherapists to assess the relative merits of the various techniques employed. This part is necessarily more technical than the first part.

The five-year results are set out in a series of interesting tables and the pathology of the various lesions is briefly discussed. The various stages of the disease which are commonly accepted are mentioned and the probability of cure or palliation is gone into.

The book as a whole is an attempt to summarise the results of a team of workers in the special field of cancer therapy. The general impression is that the very high standard set and maintained at the Christie Hospital and Holt Radium Institute is showing a steadily rising improvement in results which compare more than favourably with those of any other centre. There is no attempt to claim too much for radiation therapy and where results are unsatisfactory they are plainly stated.

The data employed in producing the tables in this book point to a very large number of cases treated and an admirable follow-up system without which the book could not have been written.

The authors are to be congratulated warmly on the splendid results achieved, the clear and simple language in which the book has been written and the clarity of their statistical tables.

This book will not only be of the greatest value to all radiotherapists, but will be of much interest to every surgeon who has to deal with cancer.

It will also provide much valuable and interesting information for every doctor who is interested in the subject of cancer. A short bibliography of relevant publications by members of the Staff of the hospital since 1940 is appended. The book is published by Messrs. E. & S. Livingstone at the modest price of 10s. 6d., and the general format and printing are alike excellent.

F. P. R.

LORD LISTER : His Life and Doctrine. By Douglas Guthrie. Pp. 128. Illustrated. Edinburgh : E. & S. Livingstone. 1949. 15s.

THIS is not only a biography of Lister, but it is an excellent introduction to some of the great milestones in medical history. It will be most interesting reading for all students of medicine and its kindred sciences, and particularly for those of the Edinburgh and Glasgow schools, because it gives such an intimate picture, not only of Lister, but of his many distinguished seniors and contemporaries.

R. W. M. S.